1883

J. E. Odgers.

An Examination of the Doctrine

OF THE

NATURAL EVOLUTION OF MIND;

OR,

THE DISTINCTIVE FEATURES OF SCIENTIFIC AND SPIRITUAL KNOWLEDGE:

AN ADDRESS

DELIVERED IN

MANCHESTER NEW COLLEGE, LONDON,

AT THE OPENING OF ITS 98TH SESSION,

ON TUESDAY, OCT. 2ND, 1883.

BY

CHARLES B. UPTON, B.A., B.Sc.

PROFESSOR OF MENTAL AND MORAL PHILOSOPHY.

WILLIAMS AND NORGATE,

14, HENRIETTA STREET, COVENT GARDEN, LONDON;
AND 20, SOUTH FREDERICK STREET, EDINBURGH.

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With the writer's kind regards

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NATURAL EVOLUTION OF MIND.

I INVITE your attention this afternoon to a consideration of the question whether man, who discovers the evolutionary processes of nature, can himself be reasonably regarded as wholly a product of these same evolutionary processes. The reason why I have selected this subject for our opening Address is, that I am strongly impressed with the conviction that the nature of the answer which a thoughtful person gives to the above question will go very far towards determining the direction of his sympathies, either to scientific Atheism on the one hand, or to spiritual Christianity on the other. If the soul of man and its moral and spiritual activities can be accounted for and explained on the same principles on which recent Evolutionists endeavour to explain, and to some extent succeed in explaining, the history of our planet and the origin and development of the forms and feelings of the animal kingdom, then it seems to me evident that the *raison d'être* of Manchester New College virtually ceases to exist, seeing that in this case the theological knowledge which it is its special mission to freely impart, vanishes into the shadowy background

of outgrown fancies and exploded delusions. Let it once be granted that man is wholly a part of nature, and therefore wholly explicable in the same way in which nature is explicable, and it will not, I think, be difficult to show that our present ethical ideas and religious sentiments are essentially irrational and unjustifiable.

Nor is this a matter of theory only; it is a momentous practical matter which is daily forcing itself more conspicuously before the notice of reflective minds. I am very far from meaning that the doctrine of Evolution as applied to *Nature* exercises any anti-theological influence; indeed, the case is quite the contrary, for Evolution in this sense harmonizes most completely with Christian Theism, and, in my opinion, quite strengthens the hands of a spiritual philosophy. It is the doctrine of Evolution as applied to *Man* that is at present divorcing a large and increasing section of the scientific world from all connection with theology, and gradually undermining the religious vitality of many liberal Christian congregations by removing the rational basis of the ideas of Sin and Moral Responsibility. If it is an essential principle of Christianity that man is capable of alienating himself from the sympathy of God through wilfully seeking his own enjoyment when he could and should have obeyed the voice of duty, then surely Christianity and the doctrine of the natural and necessary evolution of man are utterly incompatible, and the intrusion of the one is the extrusion of the other.

It is the more necessary to insist on this vital antagonism, and to repudiate all possibility of a wholesome compromise between Christianity and the doctrine of human evolution, because many liberal Christians appear to think that, since physical science in the past has done good service to religion in freeing it from superstitious accretions

and in checking the irrational tyranny of orthodox dogmatism, it necessarily follows that the ambitious theories which in the present day emanate from prominent men of science can affect detrimentally the theological position of our orthodox brethren only, and must of course be quite confirmatory of the views of liberal and advanced followers of Jesus. Never was there a greater or more fatal mistake! That genuine science always has been and will always continue to be on the side of true religion we may well believe, for otherwise our nature would be divided against itself; but my earnest and firm contention is, that this theory of human nature which I am about to examine is not science, but rather illogical and groundless speculation; and that, so far from being in harmony with essential religious beliefs, it necessarily involves the complete annihilation of the rational foundations of all ethical ideas and all theological doctrines, orthodox and heterodox alike. In propagating this theory of humanity, our scientists are no longer defending themselves against the illegitimate pretensions of theologians; they are now in their turn invading the territory of ethics and theology, and assailing them in their most vital points; so that I think the time cannot be far distant when all those who are truly in sympathy with the teachings and spirit of Jesus will clearly see that this is for them a question of religious life or death, and, forgetting the minor differences among themselves, will unite in a common effort to heave off, if possible, by more exact science and more profound philosophy, this intellectual incubus which now so grievously depresses religious thought, and furnishes Secularism and Atheism with their most telling arguments.

In thus expressing my own strong conviction that no satisfactory compromise is possible between Christianity

and the doctrine of the natural evolution of the mind, I am not ignorant that several thoughtful and devout persons have held that there is no necessary antagonism between these two positions, or have, at least, occupied them alternately without any clear consciousness of their essential incongruity. The example of Priestley and his followers may, no doubt, be fairly quoted as an instance in which a view of human nature not greatly dissimilar to that now advanced by Evolutionists was held in conjunction with firm adhesion to the Christian religion. It must be borne in mind, however, that Priestley was not drawn to the New Testament solely by sympathy with the moral and spiritual insight manifested in the teachings of Jesus, but also by the consideration that the miracles, and especially the bodily resurrection of Christ, supplemented in a most desirable way the negative results of his own philosophy. Were Priestley living among us at this hour, it can hardly be doubted that he would either entirely re-construct his philosophy, or would enrol himself in the Agnostic ranks. The very fact that, so soon as it was seen that the evidence of religion is to be sought not in outward miracles but in inward experience, Priestley's Unitarianism failed to maintain itself against the intuitional Christianity of Channing, shows that the connection between the Priestleian philosophy and Christianity was accidental and temporary, and, resting on no inner affinities, tended to dissolve when the casual circumstances which had favoured the transient union no longer existed.

I may be reminded, however, that this combination of evolutionist views of human nature with an acceptance of the Christian faith is not altogether a thing of the past, but may be found at present in some important American pulpits, and perhaps in some English pulpits likewise. I

confess that I was greatly astonished when I was told a few years ago that the eloquent minister of a large congre gation in Boston, Mass., the Rev. M. J. Savage, has succeeded in combining, to his own satisfaction and to that of his hearers, adhesion to the fundamental doctrines of Mr. Herbert Spencer with a warm acceptance of the inner spirit of New-Testament teaching. Curious to learn how an enterprize which seemed to me to bear upon its front the clearest signs of utter hopelessness had nevertheless been apparently successful, I read the chief publications of this talented preacher and writer. The secret of his success as a preacher was not far to seek. I found that his style was clear and forcible, his acquaintance with science and literature considerable, his moral tone always healthy and vigorous; but I also found—and this quite cleared up my difficulty in reference to the question before us—that there was in his writings a remarkable unconsciousness of the claims of logical consistency, which enabled him on one page to sing the praises of human evolution, and then perhaps on the next to use language concerning the dignity and duties of manhood which has no intelligible meaning except in connection with an entirely different philosophy. For example, in his book entitled "Belief in God," I found an account of the human Will which would secure the unqualified approval of the most extreme Evolutionist. "The Will," he says, "is simply the resultant of all the forces which make up the being. If we stand by the bank of a river, we see it flowing in a certain direction, north or south. There are eddies, counter-currents and curves and turnings of the river, but on the whole it sweeps with its whole force in a certain direction. So we may observe concerning a man; may observe, as we think, concerning the operations of our own consciousness. There

are eddies, there are counter-currents, there are conflicting interests and desires, but at last we *will*. What do we mean? We mean that the resultant of all these influences and forces is that we move in a certain direction. This is all we mean by 'Will.' It is all we can mean in an intelligent use of language" (p. 68).

In another passage, however, this doctrine of the natural evolution of the "Will" seems to be entirely forgotten, for we read that "when the animal in human nature gains the supremacy, man is degraded and falls back into a position worse than that of the animal by as much as he is capable of something higher." *Degraded because he is capable of something higher!* Surely, if the will is always the resultant of all the forces which make up the being, the man is never capable at any moment of being or becoming anything else than he actually is or becomes. This, then, is not the reconciliation of Evolution and Christianity, but simply manifest self-contradiction. Again, when arguing in favour of Immortality, Mr. Savage urges that this belief is supported "by the sense of *Justice*, the imperishable belief that somehow all things will come out right." What possible meaning can the word "Justice" have in reference to a being who has not had the slightest self-determining power? Does Mr. Savage mean that God's sense of justice induces Him to give to every man the same sum-total of pleasure, and therefore, if a sufficient share of pleasure has not been evolved for any one in this life, God will make it up for him in some other state of existence? But I despair of finding any intelligible sense in this strange commingling of Christian and Evolutionist ideas. Further, we are told by Mr. Savage "that an irreligious man is a *failure;* he is something less than he was made for." According to Mr. Savage's account of "Will," it is evident

that a man's character is entirely a manufactured article which the man himself could not possibly have made other than it actually is, and therefore, if there has been "a failure," we should like Mr. Savage to tell us at whose door this failure is to be laid.

The reading of Mr. Savage's books, then, so far from disclosing how it is possible to harmonize the views of Mr. Spencer with those of Jesus, seems to me to bring the utter incompatibility of these views into the clearest possible light, and to force upon the attention of all thoughtful Christians the necessity of submitting to rigorous examination a theory of man's nature which, if accepted, can hardly fail in the case of consistent thinkers to exercise the most vital influence both on their ethical ideas and on their religious faith. Such an examination I will now endeavour to institute.

Within the narrow limits of this Address I can of course do no more than sketch in outline the main considerations which seem to me to show that the view of human nature which Evolution presents, plausible though it may seem, is really quite untenable, and would not have attained its present influence had not the physical sciences secured for themselves in the present day a far too exclusive attention. It may be difficult to persuade the English mind that the study of external nature, which has conferred, and is conferring, such substantial benefits on mankind, can possibly under any circumstances become the cause or occasion of mischievous error. I am convinced that such is nevertheless the case; and the reason of this is, that the physical sciences, when they engross the intellectual interest, accustom the student to a method of research which, though most appropriate and effective in the study of Nature, is most inappropriate and misleading

in the study of Mind. I will presently endeavour to justify this assertion; but first it is necessary that I should dwell for a moment on what is meant when I say that Evolutionists have been to a very encouraging extent successful in explaining natural phenomena. I mean, then, that such doctrines as that of the Persistence of Force and of Natural Selection do materially assist us in our endeavours to bring the manifold phenomena of nature into intelligible connection with each other. Science has, at all events, rendered it very probable that the human being, in so far as he is an animal, is descended from animal progenitors; and though it has not yet succeeded in giving a satisfactory account of the origin of organic life, and still less of the origin of sentiency, it must nevertheless be admitted that in speculating on these subjects it is strictly within its own province, and may possibly some day furnish an approximate answer to these interesting questions. It may be true, as some recent Evolutionists maintain, that sentient life, in some exceedingly faint and diffused form, pervades even inorganic nature, assumes a less indeterminate shape in the organism of vegetables, and at length, in connection with the elaborate nervous system and brain of the animal, becomes so concentrated as to reach that stage which we call distinct sensation or feeling. In discussing such matters, Evolutionists are on their own proper ground, and their conclusions cannot possibly, so far as I can see, unfavourably affect theology.*

But now comes the point which I wish especially to emphasize. While we admit that Evolution may gradually throw light on the order and relations of the processes of change in nature, it is all-important to remember that science never has discovered, and from the necessity of

* See note at the end of this Address.

the case never can discover, any *original Causation.* It sees in nature continual changes, and notes that these changes present themselves in a sequence whose uniform order is never broken ; but the primitive source or cause of these changes is wholly hidden from its ken. Everywhere it sees effects, and only effects. What it calls causes are confessedly themselves effects, and therefore the whole of nature, to the merely scientific vision, presents itself, and must present itself, as an aggregate of passive and determined products or effects of an invisible causality. It is true that science, in its conception of Force, assumes the existence of a secondary or derived causation, which it is apt to think may take the place of that original or real causality which philosophy never ceases to desiderate, and which science never succeeds in detecting. Our Evolutionists tell us that Force is persistent in essence and quantity though ever changing in form, and that this Force is the cause to which we are to assign the changing phenomena of nature. But when we ask what it is which causes Force to assume in succession the myriad modifications which are continually varying the expression of nature's countenance, we are told that each modification is produced by some previous dynamical change, and for the explanation of this last-mentioned change we are referred in turn to some still earlier event or phenomenon. Hence the activity of Force which science imagines in order to explain natural phenomena turns out to be in every case conditioned and determined, and therefore to be utterly devoid of original causality. Every object in nature moves as it is moved, and gives not the slightest evidence of possessing any faculty of free self-determination.

We may go further, and say that not only are all the objects which science contemplates determined or caused,

but that they are necessarily so. It is not possible for the mind to present to itself as an *object* that which is uncaused or self-determining. This may not appear evident at the first glance, but a little reflection will, I think, convince you that it is true. Our experience reveals to us one, and only one, self-determining being, and that being is Mind. Can, then, the self-conscious mind make itself or another mind the *object* of its attention? You may reply, "Yes; I may make you, and you may make me, the object of attention." I admit, of course, that we may make each other's body, or even the passive states of each other's mind, the object of our mental vision; but if I try to make your essential personality, that is, your personal activity of thought or will, an object of my mental attention, I find myself utterly baffled in this endeavour. All I can do is in imagination to drop for the moment my own personality and to assume yours; but then it is not that you are the object of my attention, it is that I am assuming your place and attending to such objects as I suppose that you would attend to. Hence it is that the most distinguished philosophers have held as a fundamental principle that the Self or Ego is always the subject thinking, and never the object thought. It follows, then, that all which possesses real causality or power of self-determination falls of necessity beyond the scope of scientific perception and investigation. "*Nature,*" says Jacobi, "*conceals God;* for through her whole domain she reveals only fate, only an indissoluble chain of mere efficient causes without beginning and without end, excluding with equal necessity both providence and chance. . . . . *Man reveals God;* for man by his intelligence rises above Nature, and in virtue of this intelligence is conscious of himself as a power not only independent of, but opposed to, Nature, and capable of resisting,

conquering and controlling her. As man has a living faith in this power, superior to Nature, which dwells in him, so has he a belief in God, a feeling, an experience of His existence. As he does not believe in this power, so does he not believe in God; he sees, he experiences naught in existence but nature, necessity, fate."

From what has been said, it follows, I think, inevitably that those students who confine their attention to mathematical and physical science must form the invincible habit of regarding all existences as wholly determined or necessitated, and that therefore the notion of a free or self-determining being, such as I believe man to be—a being who out of two or more possibilities before him determines one actuality—becomes utterly alien and inconceivable to the exclusively scientific mind. If a thinker whose mind is thus preoccupied with the ideas and methods of physical science should turn his attention to what is called "the science of Mind," what account of human nature would he be likely to render? Before answering this question, it must be premised that while I have emphatically maintained that the essential element in our personality, the self-determining power of Will, can by no means be made the object of scientific observation and explanation, there is nevertheless a very large portion of the experience that is included under the name "Man" which is the quite legitimate object of scientific treatment. Our sensations, our emotions and our thoughts (but not the *act of thinking*), may all be investigated after the method of science, and their relations and sequences satisfactorily determined. In short, all that portion of our mental experience in which the Ego is passively affected and not actively willing, forms the proper object of mental science.

In this statement I have most carefully reserved from

the legitimate sphere of scientific study (meaning by that, the study of the *objects* of thought) all those self-conscious acts of choice and will which seem to me to be the very essence of our personality, and to effectually differentiate man from the animals to whom he may be physiologically related. These personal acts of voluntary attention and self-determination mark out man as a true and original cause, a self-conscious, self-governing being; and so far as he is this, he transcends the scope of scientific perception and explanation, and can only be spiritually or philosophically studied. The enthusiastic student of nature, however, no sooner turns his attention to "mental science" than he makes short work with this reservation and exception, which seems to me to be of such momentous and essential importance. He at once pooh-poohs it. Shall he, after having been so successful in his application of the principle of Evolution to Nature, be hindered by a mere metaphysical fiction from the thoroughgoing application of the same principle to that highest and most interesting product of biological development which is called "Man"? "Assuredly not," he replies; "for what, after all, is this 'self-determining Will,' about which you metaphysicians and theologians make so much ado? Why, it is nothing more than the final stage of Desire." The following quotation from Mr. Fiske's "Cosmic Philosophy" will serve to show how complacently the Spencerian Evolutionist disposes of that supreme act of self-conscious volition which marks the transition from the simply animal to the spiritual stage of being: "The state of consciousness called Desire is accompanied by a nascent excitement of the nerve fibres distributed upon the muscular apparatus, whose activity is requisite for the attainment of the desired object. There is a tendency to go through with the movements for

realizing the desire; and this tendency, unless neutralized by an antagonist tendency, must end in action. In the language of dynamics, tension, when not counteracted by opposing tension, must pass into *vis viva*. This passage of nervous tension into nervous *vis viva* constitutes volition, which may for practical purposes be regarded indifferently as the final stage of emotion or as the initial stage of action."

If man were wholly an animal and not a rational and moral being, this passage would, I think, fairly explain the relation between his feelings and his movements; and the fact that it entirely fails to depict our present consciousness of self-originated activity, is of itself cogent evidence that the spirit of man transcends the sphere of animal, and therefore necessitated, phenomena, and belongs essentially to the spiritual sphere of self-determining and responsible causes. If, however, Mr. Fiske's account of the nature of human volition is once admitted to be correct, then the advocates of "mental science" need fear no other check to their evolutionary zeal; for by this admission man is at once wholly surrendered to necessity and therefore to scientific explanation. To speak of such a being as capable of sin, and therefore as justly amenable to retribution for wrong-doing, is as intrinsically nonsensical as if we were to blame the cat for foraging in the pantry. Puss is, on this theory, as essentially a moral creature as man is; for she, too, is accessible to the operation of "motive," and the administration to her of a good cuffing will, by establishing an association between pain and pantry, effectually determine her to the path of rectitude in the future. No one ever dreams of moral sentiment in reference to her, and yet I venture to maintain that no essential difference can be shown to exist between her

morality and the morality of man as depicted by Mr. Fiske's science. Human morality, to the believer in the natural evolution of the self-conscious mind and will, can be nothing more than animal association in a more elaborately developed stage. With good reason, then, does one of the most gifted of British philosophers, the late Prof. Ferrier of St. Andrews, emphatically declare that the picture which Evolution draws of humanity "is not the picture of a man, but the representation of an automaton, that is what it cannot help being; an engine performing what it *must* perform; a weathercock shifting helplessly in the winds of sensibility; a mere association machine through which ideas pass, linked together by laws over which the machine has no control; anything, in short, except that free and self-sustained centre of underived and therefore responsible activity which we call *Man*."

"And this," he instructively adds, "is the false representation of man which Philosophy invariably and inevitably pictures forth *whenever she makes common cause with the physical sciences*."

We have before seen that Mind and the objects of Nature are distinctly differenced from, and contrasted with, each other by the fact that the mind, or self-conscious thinking and willing faculty in man, is by its very nature the *subject* and not the *object* of thought, and that it is the characteristic of all objects of thought to be wholly determined by a causality not their own. Bearing this in mind, we are now in a condition to inquire what is the exact nature of the error committed by students of Mind when they attempt, as mental philosophers in this country so often do, to make what Ferrier calls "common cause with the physical sciences," and by so doing inevitably arrive at the gross caricature of human nature which the above

quotation so graphically describes. In other words, we wish to learn why it is a fatal blunder to represent physical science and mental philosophy as so far analogous, that while one is wholly the study of the phenomena of Nature, the other is wholly the study of the phenomena of Mind. To answer this question, we must first remember that in the study of Nature, as in all study of phenomena, there are necessarily present two factors, the Subject, or the mind which knows, and the Object, or that which is known. The two terms of this antithesis, which are always concurrent in the act of knowledge, are utterly different in their essential character. The mind, or thinking subject, reveals itself in the very act of knowing as free or self-determined, while the object known, or nature, is revealed, in the very fact of becoming the object of thought, as that which is not self-determined, and which, therefore, owes its existence and activity to a causality not its own. Now of these two factors in the study of Nature, the latter, or the object known, is the only one that has any interest for the student of physical science. His sole aim is to know nature, and therefore, though the mind, or thinking subject, is indispensably present as a co-factor in every act of perception and cognition, yet it never directly engages the scientist's attention. When he says "I" or "my mind" notices this dissimilarity or this difference in the objects of nature, he does not think about the "I" or the mind, or feel that it is any business of his to take account of this thinking subject. But now let us carefully consider whether the student of Mind can safely employ an analogous method in his special study. Can he legitimately follow the example of the physicist and leave out of consideration the knowing subject, the "I," which is necessarily present in all study of mental pheno-

mena, and content himself with recording the observed relations of difference and sequence among these mental phenomena. The psychologist does indeed only too frequently attempt to follow the example of the student of Nature, and the result inevitably is that the picture which professes to depict humanity is a picture in which all the features which are distinctively human are conspicuously absent. "Mind," he tells us, "is primarily composed of sensations and of feelings of resemblance and difference among sensations;" and he carefully abstains from alluding to that self-conscious principle, or Ego, which is as necessarily present and operative in the act of distinguishing between sensations as it is in distinguishing between the objects of Nature. But while it is quite allowable for the student of Science to ignore the acts of the knowing subject as no concern of his, the student of Mind is in reference to this matter in a totally different predicament. His professed aim is to give a complete account of the human mind, of the mental activity which thinks, as well as of the mental passivity which is thought; and if, as is too often the case, in his eagerness to affiliate his study with the popular and successful physical sciences, he ignores this all-important subjective side of the mental fact, his account of human nature becomes fatally defective and utterly misleading; the element of self-determination or free causality, which is the characteristic mark of humanity, and is indispensable to the intelligible interpretation of our mental and moral consciousness, is entirely omitted; the human mind is treated wholly as the object and not as the subject of thought, and therefore the psychology which ensues is at the best but the psychology of an animal, and not that of a self-determining and responsible man. On these grounds, then, I maintain that the spirit or will of man cannot be treated

as a part of nature, and so brought within the range of the phenomenal sciences, without a violation of the fundamental fact of consciousness, namely, the distinction between the self-determining subject which knows and acts, and the passive object which is known and acted upon.

I am aware, however, that the influential school of British psychologists who work on the lines associated with the honoured name of J. S. Mill, does profess to recognize the existence and functions of the Ego in the act of thinking, and, what is more, to give a satisfactory account of how this mysterious "I" is produced. Beginning with animal sensations and muscular feelings at a period antecedent to that antithesis of subject and object which constitutes knowledge, this school of thinkers professes to explain the genesis of this antithesis. A succession of animal sensations, which have, of course, no knowledge either of themselves or of their mutual differences, is supposed by the action of the associations which link them together to fashion by degrees a thinking subject on the one hand, and an object of thought on the other.

A recent and conclusive refutation of this theory of the genesis of a permanent self-conscious Ego out of an ever-changing succession of animal sensations, has been furnished by the late lamented Prof. T. H. Green, whose early death is an irreparable loss to European philosophy. Mr. Mill himself had indeed, with conscientious candour, indicated the fatal incompetency of his own system, when he admitted that the necessity of thought compels us "either to believe that the Mind, or Ego, is something different from any series of feelings, or to accept the paradox that something which *ex hypothesi* is but a series of feelings *can be aware of itself as a series.*" Prof. Green

emphasizes the admitted inconceivability of this latter alternative, and contends, with what appears to me to be irresistible logic, that there is an absolute difference between changes, such as nature and our passive states of mind perpetually present, and that intelligent consciousness or knowledge of change which pertains to the thinking Self; and that therefore any development of the one into the other is intrinsically impossible. If his argument is sound, and as yet our British psychologists have not been able to detect any flaw in it, it follows that every attempt of sensational Idealists, such as Prof. Bain, or of agnostic Realists, such as Mr. H. Spencer, to explain the origin of the self-conscious Ego out of an unsubstantial aggregate of ever-changing mental states, is a quixotic enterprize whose necessary failure is implied in the very conditions of all knowledge. "Nature," says Prof. Green, "with all that belongs to it, is a process of change; change on a uniform method, no doubt, but change still. All the relations by which we know it are relations in the way of change, or by which change is determined. But neither can any process of change yield a consciousness of itself, which in order to be a consciousness of the change must be equally present to all stages of the change; nor can any consciousness of change, since the whole of it must be present at once, be itself a process of change." He concludes, therefore, that the fact that man is self-conscious and capable of acquiring knowledge, leads us necessarily to the conviction that he exerts a free activity, an activity which is not in time, not a link in the chain of natural becoming, and which has no antecedents other than itself, but is self-originated. "There is no incompatibility," he adds, "between this doctrine and the admission that all the processes of brain and nerve and tissue, all the functions of life and

sense organic to this activity, have a strictly natural history. There would only be such an incompatibility if these processes and functions constituted or made up the self-distinguishing man, the man capable of knowledge. But this we have seen is what they cannot do."

If the question be asked, at what stage in the general zoological development, or in the animal life of the human infant, does the spiritual or self-conscious life supervene upon the merely animal existence, the answer is, that its presence is revealed whenever in the animal or in the infant there arises the consciousness of "I," who know, as contrasted with the nature, not myself, which is known. The important point which I have been endeavouring to demonstrate is that this self-consciousness cannot be a development out of a merely sentient condition, though it is quite possible, and indeed in the highest degree probable, that a particular stage of physiological development furnishes the necessary condition or organism through which the spiritual principle is enabled to manifest itself in this phenomenal world of space and time. The lower animals that we are acquainted with do not appear to have become, as yet at least, in any degree the organs of this self-conscious personal life. We cannot, of course, speak with perfect assurance on this point, for we are unable to enter into their states of feeling and pronounce confidently whether or not there is anything there corresponding to the consciousness which we exercise in knowledge; but we may fairly say, with Mr. Green, that "their actions, as observed from the outside, would seem to be explicable without it—explicable as resulting from the determination of action by feeling, and that of feeling by feeling; in other words, as resulting from successive changes of the sensibility—without any need of ascribing to them any

consciousness of change, any mental synthesis of the modifications they experience as belonging to an inter-related world." When once this spiritual principle of self-consciousness does reveal itself through an animal organism, then the germ is present from which a mind like our own may be developed; but if this principle is not present in any of the members of the animal kingdom save man, then no development of such mind as may be assigned to the lower animals could possibly result in the self-conscious mind of man.

In the present Address I have confined myself to attempting to establish the existence of a spiritual or self-determining principle in man, by an examination and analysis of the fact that he is an intelligent or self-conscious being. If I have been at all successful in my attempt, and have thus justified the belief that there is that in humanity which does not belong to the changing phenomena of nature, and therefore cannot possibly be amenable to scientific explanation, then "the links are at once broken which rivet the personal essence and social history of man to the chain of physical necessity," and a firm fulcrum is secured by means of which the spirit may surmount those intellectual obstacles which now often bar the way to that faith in the soul's personal relations with the Eternal which has ever been the source of man's surest consolations, and the needful stimulus to all his most noble and heroic endeavours. Had it been possible within the limits of this paper to appeal also to the evidence of man's moral and religious consciousness, I might have fortified my present position by pointing out remarkable and characteristic features in that consciousness which are most perplexing and indeed incomprehensible if man be regarded as a mere passing phase of the process of Evolution, but which find

a ready explanation if he be regarded as a spiritual being, who is essentially related, not to Nature, which is ever changing and ever held in the bonds of an imposed necessity, but to that Eternal Spirit of whose thought and will Nature is the phenomenal expression. Our moral consciousness, for instance, imperatively demands that our wills be free to choose between siding with the love of pleasure and siding with the love of God—between obeying the promptings of the lower and of the higher Self; and though this freedom of choice is impossible, and indeed meaningless, if man is wholly a part of nature, it becomes quite intelligible if he is a self-governing being partially freed from the sway of natural causation, and placed in this phenomenal world, as in an educational theatre, where he may, if he will, follow the leading of the divine Ideal, enter into the privileges of the eternal life, and pass, not by the constraint of external or internal necessity, but in virtue of free self-surrender, into that state of personal sympathy and mystic union with the Father within him, wherein is involved the growing realization and satisfaction of all the highest aspirations and deepest longings of the soul.

If we consider, further, that our spiritual affections postulate immortality, that our intellectual and moral education appears most fragmentary and disappointing if it be not the prelude to an ever-expanding experience, and that reverence and worship in the felt presence of the Eternal is as perennial to the human mind and heart as is the interest in the finite and the temporal, it seems to me that we must fain acknowledge that all these facts have no relation to a being who is only an ever-changing congeries of natural phenomena, but are, on the other hand, precisely what we should expect in a being who is at once

ontologically or spiritually akin to the abiding Cause of nature, and at the same time physiologically related to that passing stream of cosmical life which is the phenomenal manifestation of the Eternal.

If the view of human nature which I am upholding be the true one, then all the sacred literature of the past and all the religious experiences of the present are permanently fraught with the highest interest and significance, and form a most fertile field of study, the earnest and enthusiastic cultivation of which is at least as practically necessary to human progress and human happiness as is the study of physical nature. No longer need Science and Theology cherish foolish jealousies; each has its own proper and inalienable province; each is an indispensable part of true culture; and each is sure in the long run to suffer if interest in the other languishes and declines.

Before taking leave of our subject, let us, in conclusion, compare for a moment the difference in the prospect before humanity according as the evolutionary or the spiritual theory of human nature gains the ascendancy. According to the spiritual theory, our being has its roots in the eternity of God; and in so far as we die to the sensual and the selfish, we enter more intimately and essentially into that eternal and causal sphere to which the analogies of phenomenal decay and death have no application. If this philosophical theory be true, as I feel assured it is, then, as culture advances and human affections become more pure and deep, the soul need not sink into the deep darkness of pessimism at the crushing thought that, while our divinest and holiest loves crave eagerly for the bread of eternal life, Science has nothing to offer them but the mocking stone of phenomenal change and decay; rather will it cherish a confident faith that all that is divine in

our personality and in our personal relations is of necessity eternal, and hopefully exclaim with Emerson,

> "What is excellent,
> As God lives, is permanent;
> Hearts are dust, hearts' loves remain;
> Heart's love will meet thee again."

If, on the other hand, the evolutionary theory of human nature be the true one, what is the prospect which it holds out? The outlook which Evolution furnishes as to the only future of man is graphically described in a recent work by Dr. H. Maudsley, who is not only one of the ablest of the exponents of this view, but also one of the most enthusiastic, if indeed a theory so depressing can evoke enthusiasm. He tells us that the common law of life is slow acquisition, equilibrium for a time, then a gentle decline, which soon becomes a rapid decay, and finally death; that this law governs the growth, decline and fall of nations as well as of individuals; nor can humanity as a whole expect to escape the doom thus plainly decreed for it. And he depicts the closing scene in the long drama of humanity as follows: "A few scattered families of degraded human beings, living perhaps in snow huts near the equator, very much as Esquimaux now live near the pole, will represent the last wave of the receding tide of human existence before its final extinction; until at last a frozen earth, incapable of cultivation, is left without energy to produce a living particle of any sort, and so death itself is dead."

Is there, then, to be no spiritual harvest garnered for eternity as the produce of this grand history of the earth and its inhabitants? On this theory, none. All that is beautiful in art—all the inspirations of genius in literature —all that is noble and heroic in human character—all the

precious spiritual gains, in short, for the sake of which the best of men have toiled and died—will utterly vanish away and leave no permanent result behind. Surely such a theory is of all theories the least stimulating to cheerful hope and virtuous endeavour. If it could be proved true, we should have to accept it and make the best of it; but I am inclined to think that even then many Voltaires would arise and not only say that if there were no God it would be necessary to invent one, but also that if the evolutionary theory of human nature is true and the spiritual theory false, we must needs, if we wish life to seem worth living and mankind to be saved from pessimism and despair, continue to hug our foolish delusions and seek to forget our scientific truths.

NOTE REFERRED TO ON PAGE 10.

If it could be demonstrated that the elements of inorganic nature are so constituted and related that under certain conditions they compact themselves into the lowest forms of sentient protoplasm, this would only intensify my conviction that the "Matter" in which such marvellous capacities inhere can be nothing less than the phenomenal effect of Spirit, i.e. of causal Will and Reason. The fact, too, that man is enabled by the hypothesis of certain dynamical principles and laws to approximate more and more to a conception of the intelligible unity of the infinitely varied and infinitely varying phenomena of the cosmos, affords, surely, a strong presumption that the human reason which can thus successfully unravel the intricate complexity of nature is itself essentially akin to the original causality to which that complexity is due.

It may be worth remarking, in this connection, that the doctrine here maintained, that Evolution, so long as it does not pretend to explain *how the self-conscious soul is evolved*, cannot come into collision with Christianity, was upheld with great emphasis and ability by all the leading speakers at the Church Congress at Reading on the same day on which this Address was delivered. If the rational principles

asserted at that Congress by both laity and clergy become universally accepted and acted upon by Christians, one may safely say that whatever discord may in the future arise between *savans* and theologians will not be the fault of the latter. The phenomenal sciences will in that case have complete freedom of action in their own rightful domain; and if they intrude their explanations, as of late they have been doing, into the region of spiritual activity and causality, of which they know, and can know, nothing, they commit an intellectual trespass which can only be productive of confusion and mischief, and which must at length result in their defeat at the hands of philosophy and their ignominious retreat to their own proper territory. It is as remarkable as it is creditable to the Anglican Church that, as represented by the speakers at Reading, it has at this critical time freely conceded to science all that science can fairly ask, and has practically shown that Evolution, so far from vitally wounding Christianity, has had, and will have, the beneficial effect of enabling Christianity to better understand its own true and eternal essence, and to divest itself of those accidental anti-scientific ideas which have hitherto disfigured and hampered it.

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